

A
SERMON

Preach'd at

WOOD--STREET

On the 23d of *October*, 1716.

Being the Anniversary Day

OF

THANKSGIVING

For the

DELIVERANCE of this CITY

From the

Irish Rebellion,

In the Year 1641.

By J. BOYSE.

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S E R M O N

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Nehemiah, Chap. IX. Ver. xxvii.

*Therefore thou deliveredst them into the Hand
of their Enemies, who vexed them : And
in the Time of their Trouble when they cried
unto thee, thou heardest them from Heaven ;
and according to thy manifold Mercies, thou
gavest them Saviours, who saved them out
of the Hand of their Enemies.*

WE may in this Historical Account of
God's Dealings with his ancient Peo-
ple, behold a lively Representation of
his providential Dispensations towards
the Protestant Inhabitants of this
Kingdom, ever since the Reformed Religion (as it
stands in Opposition to *Popery*) was establish'd among
us. Our great Provocations have often expos'd us to
the awful Effects of God's righteous Displeasure and
Vengeance.

Severity : And yet his undeserved Mercies have as often interpos'd in the Time of our Extremity and Distress, for our seasonable Deliverance. And as the Remembrance of the *Former* shou'd serve for our Humiliation and Warning, so the Consideration of the *Latter* shou'd powerfully excite our thankful Praises.

From the Words we may observe for our Instruction,

I. The Sins of a People professing the true Religion, often come to such an Height, as to provoke a Righteous God *to deliver them into the Hands of their Enemies to vex them.*

II. When God, upon their earnest Cries, raises up Instruments for their Deliverance, and crowns their Attempts with Success : They ought to ascribe the Glory thereof to his undeserved Mercy.

III. The oftner those Deliverances are *renew'd*, the Mercy of God in vouchsafing 'em is greatly enhanced and shou'd therefore be the more thankfully own'd and ador'd.

Of these Heads I shall briefly treat in their Order and then apply 'em to our own Case.

I. The Sins of a People professing the true Religion, may come to such an Height, as to provoke a Righteous God *to deliver them into the Hands of their Enemies to vex them.*

The Truth of this Observation was fully exemplified in the Conduct of Divine Providence towards his ancient People, and particularly during the Time of the Government of the *Judges*, to which the Text seems principally to refer.

We read, That when *Joshua* and most of that Generation (that were his Contemporaries) *were gathered to their Fathers, there arose another Generation that knew not the Lord, nor yet the Works he had done for Israel ; and these*

Evil in the Sight of the Lord ; and particularly by relapsing into the Idolatry of the Neighbouring Nations. And for this the Anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he deliver'd 'em into the Hands of Spoilers, that spoiled 'em, and he sold 'em into the Hands of their Enemies round about, so that they cou'd no longer stand before their Enemies ; whetsoever they went out, the Hand of the Lord was against 'em for Evil, as the Lord had said and sworn unto 'em, and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the Lord raised up Judges which delivered 'em out of the Hands of those that spoil'd 'em.

ii. Judges from the 10th to the 17th v. And accordingly that Historical Book contains a Record of the several successive Judgments that befel that People, on the Account of their frequent Backslidings from God. One while they were sold into the Hand of Chusban-Rishbathaim the King of Mesopotamia ; then into that of Eglon King of Moab ; then into the Hand of Jabin King of Canaan ; then into the Hand of the Midianites, and the Amalekites ; and then into the Hands of the Philistines. Thus their frequent Rebellions against God, brought 'em into frequent Subjection and Bondage to their Enemies round about. They provok'd him to take off the Guard of his powerful Protection and Defence ; and when their Glory and Strength was thus departed from them, their most despicable Enemies easily prevail'd, and brought 'em under their oppressive Yoke.

But then we may here observe, That there was a Mixture of Mercy in all these Instances of God's deserved Severity. The Rage of their most powerful Enemies, was under a Statute of Limitation.

They had indeed a Commission and Charge (or to speak more properly, a Permission) from God to spoil and vex, but not to extirpate and destroy 'em. Their Enemies were the Rod of his Anger, and the Staff of his Indignation, to correct and chastise 'em, but not to root 'em out ; to reform, but not to ruin 'em. A provoked God threw 'em often into the Furnace of Affliction, not to consume 'em, but to refine and purify 'em ; not to make a full End of 'em, as he does of those Nations that are given up to his destructive Wrath ; but that they might learn Righteous-

ness from the *Monitory Judgements* that their Iniquities brought upon 'em.

And if we trace the History of their *Kings*, as well as that of their *Judges*: We shall find the Methods of Divine Providence towards 'em, generally the same. They were often brought low for their Iniquities, and instead of being great among the Nations, and Princes among the Provinces, (as they were usually under their Religious and Reforming Princes) they became Tributary, i. Lam. 1. and often miserable Captives to insulting Conquerors.

And 'tis every way congruous to the *Wisdom*, to the *Holiness*, and paternal *Justice* of God, that he shou'd not suffer the National Guilt of his offending People, when it arrives to a high Degree of Aggravation, to go without some publick Mark of his righteous Displeasure. 'Tis usual with him, for the Manifestation of his impartial Justice, to cause Judgement to begin at his own House; and because he has known his own Family only of all the Families of the Earth, to punish them for all their Iniquities. i. Pet. iv. 17. iii. Amos, 2. The Provocation of a People whom he has receiv'd into his gracious Alliance, (and whom he calls his Sons and his Daughters) are attended with peculiar Aggravations; and he will evidence to the World, that he will not suffer such undutiful Carriage in his own People, but will vindicate that glorious Name of his, which has been thro' their Iniquities so openly dishonour'd and blasphem'd in the World. But,

II. When God upon the earnest Cries of his People raises up *Instruments* for their Deliverance, and crown 'em with Success; they ought to ascribe the Glory thereof to his undeserved Mercy.

So saith the Text, *In the Time of their Trouble, when they cried to thee, thou heardest them from Heaven, and according to thy manifold Mercies, thou gavest them Saviours, and saved them from the Hands of their Enemies.*

And here under this Head, we may observe,

1. 'Tis one usual Effect of those Afflictions of the People of God which come upon 'em as the just Punishment of their Sins, to awaken a Spirit of Prayer among 'em.

In the Time of their Trouble, they are wont to cry unto him. To this Purpose, the Prophet Esay represents to us, what their ordinary Carriage is, when Calamities and Distresses bring 'em to themselves, and to a Sense of their Folly in their Departure from God. Lord, in Trouble they have visited thee; and when thy Chastning was upon them, they have pour'd out their Prayers to thee. xxxvi. Isai. 16. And 'tis intimated to us, That this is often one wise and gracious End of God in such Methods of Severity towards his offending People, to rouse 'em from their Spiritual Slumber, and to stir up among 'em a Spirit of Supplication. I will arise, (saith he) and go to my Place, till they acknowledge their Offence, and seek my Face; in their Affliction they will seek me early. v. Hos. ult.

2. We may observe, That Deliverance to God's oppressed and indanger'd People, ordinarily comes as the Return of earnest Prayer.

'Tis their penitential Cry which the Remembrance of their past Offences, and the feeling Sense of their present Misery extorts from 'em, that usually moves the Bowels of his Compassion towards 'em, and awakens his Almighty Power for their seasonable Relief. Thus when God was about to rescue his Israel from their tedious Bondage in Egypt; he tells Moses, *I have surely seen the Affliction of my People, which are in Egypt, and have heard their Cry, by Reason of their Task-masters; for I know their Sorrows. iii. Exod. 7. And again v. 9. Now therefore behold the Cry of the Children of Israel is come unto me, and I have also seen the Oppression wherewith the Egyptians have oppressed them.*

When God's offending People are by their Afflictions reduc'd to a penitential and praying Frame, they are then meet Objects of Divine Mercy. Deliverance

is then like to make the deepest and most ingenuous Impressions upon 'em. God's Power and Mercy will be most sensibly own'd and ador'd in bringing Salvation to 'em ; and they are in the most likely Dispositions to make a due Improvement of it.

3. We may observe, That when God designs the Deliverance of his afflicted People, he usually raises up Instruments to subserve his Providence in the Accomplishment of that great and gracious Work.

Thus we read here concerning God's ancient People, *That he gave them Saviours to save them out of the Hands of their Enemies.*

We have a List of such eminent *Saviours*, as God raised up from Time to Time, for the Deliverance of his *Israel*, in the forementioned Book of *Judges*, such as *Othniel*, *Ehud*, *Deborah* and *Barak*, *Gideon*, *Jephthah*, *Sampson*.

'Tis true indeed, That the great God can, whenever he pleases, effect the Deliverance of his oppressed or indanger'd People, by his own immediate Hand, and by the remarkable Interposal of his own outstretched Arm. And he has done so in some extraordinary Cases, where valuable Ends were to be attain'd by such a signal and extraordinary Display of his own Almighty Power. But this is not so congruous to his Wisdom, in the more ordinary and stated Method of his providential Dispensations, in which he chuses to make use of the Agency of second Causes, to subserve his wise Purposes and Designs. 'Tis therefore more usual with him, to raise up such Instruments as he thinks fit to employ in so excellent a Work ; and to endue 'em with that Sagacity and Wisdom, that Courage and Magnanimity, that generous Zeal and Concern for the Good of his People, that may fit 'em for it, and facilitate the Success of their noble Attempts. He with whom the Residue of the Spirit is, *he who has the Hearts of all Men in his Hands, and can turn them as the Rivers of Waters*, (into what Channel he pleases) can never want suitable Instruments to accomplish his gracious Designs for the

Redemption of his People, when they are brought to the lowest Ebb.

4. Even when God is pleas'd to raise up such Instruments for the Deliverance of his People, and crowns 'em with Success, the Glory thereof ought to be ascribed to his undeserved *Mercy*.

'Tis true indeed, when God puts such a singular Honour upon any Persons, as to employ 'em as his Instruments in so excellent a Work ; we shou'd pay 'em an affectionate and grateful Respect : We shou'd not deny 'em the just Praise that is due to their excellent Virtues of *Zeal* and *Wisdom*, of *Fortitude* and *Resolution* that appear in their generous Attempts for the publick Good. But we must chiefly fix our Eye and Thoughts upon the undeserved Mercy of God, as the Spring of his People's Deliverance : Such illustrious *Deliverers* are *his Gift* : 'Tis he inclines their Hearts to undertake that difficult and hazardous Work ; 'tis he inspires 'em with suitable Courage and Conduct ; 'tis he that makes the most formidable Opposition fall before 'em ; 'tis he strengthens their *Hands* and *Hearts* to fight his Battles ; 'tis he crowns 'em with Victory over his People's Enemies, and works so great a Salvation by 'em. His Sovereign Power and Mercy is as the *Master-wheel*, that sets these *inferior Wheels* in Motion, and directs 'em to subserve and effect his kind and compassionate Purposes towards his People, that in their great Distress, send up their earnest Cries to him for Deliverance. And to that the principal Glory of it is entirely due.

III. The oftner those Deliverances are renew'd, the Mercy of God in vouchsafing 'em is greatly inhanc'd, and shou'd therefore be the more thankfully own'd and ador'd.

And accordingly, there is a particular Stress laid upon this Consideration, both in this and in the following Verse. 'Tis said in the Text, *According to thy manifold Mercies, thou gavest them Saviours who saved them from the Hands*

Hands of their Enemies. And again in the next Verse, *But after they had rest, they did Evil again before thee, therefore lesteft thou them in the Hand of their Enemies, so that they had the Dominion over them; yet when they return'd, and cry'd to thee, thou heardest them from Heaven, and many Times didst thou deliver them according to thy Mercies.* Were not the Mercies of God manifold and great, his People's Ingratitude for former Deliverances, and wretched Misimprovement of 'em, might justly provoke him to abandon 'em entirely from his Protection; and since neither monitory Judgments, nor signal Deliverances have prevail'd to reform 'em, it wou'd be a righteous Thing with him to give 'em up to destructive Vengeance, and to be angry with them till he has utterly consum'd them, so that there shou'd be no Remnant nor Escaping. See ix. *Ezra*, 14. And shou'd God deal in such a Way of awful Severity with a People that have so ill requited his distinguishing Kindness and Favour to 'em, he wou'd be justify'd in pronouncing so terrible a Sentence upon 'em, and his Equity clear'd in the Execution of it. But when *Mercy* does again and again prevail against *Judgment* in his Royal Breast; when he, as it were, turns a deaf Ear to the loud Cry of his People's Provocations, to open it to the Cry that their Distresses and Dangers extort from 'em; when, tho' they have no Arguments to plead with him, drawn from their dutiful Behaviour, he himself draws Motives to relieve and save 'em, from his own Bowels of Compassion; this shou'd give 'em a deep Conviction of his rich and unbounded Mercy, and fill 'em with admiring adoring Thoughts of it. Signal Deliverances repeated after such renewed Provocations, cause the Mercy of God in vouchsafing 'em to shine with a brighter Lustre, and shew us, That his Thoughts and Ways of Mercy, are not as the Thoughts and Ways of Man, but far above them, as the Heavens are above the Earth. *Lv. II. 8, 9.*

It now remains, That we make some Application of this Subject to our own Case, and with respect to the Dispensations of Divine Providence towards his People in this Kingdom, both in a way of just Severity and of undeserved Mercy.

And

And this Subject calls us, both to acknowledge and reverence the Justice of God, *in delivering us for our Sins once and again into the Hands of our Enemies* ; and to adore his manifold Mercies, *in giving us Saviours who saved us from them* ; and to make such a due Improvement of Divine Mercies, as may prevent the Return of his awful Judgments.

I. This Subject calls us to acknowledge and reverence the *Justice* of God, in delivering the Protestants of this Kingdom, once and again into the Hands of our Popish Enemies. As to the *Rebellion and Massacre* of 1641, we have great Reason indeed, (as I shall shew under the next Head) to own the *Mercy* of God in the Preservation of a Remnant of Protestants in this City, (and one or two more Towns in this Kingdom) from the miserable Slaughter and Havock made in other Parts of it. But we have no Reason to forget and overlook the awful *Severity* of God, in letting loose the Reins to that destructive Rage of our Popish Enemies, that turn'd almost all the Provinces of this Kingdom into such an *Aceldama*, such a Scene of Blood and Desolation. I shall not indeed presume to be peremptory in pointing out the particular Sins that pull'd down so terrible a Judgment on those Protestants that fell into the Hands of their merciless Enemies. But we have great Reason to conclude in general, That our Predecessors of that Age had been *disobedient*, and *rebell'd against God*, by casting his Law behind their Back, and had wrought great Provocations, when they were thus given up by God into the Hands of *Men skilful to destroy*. We may well imagine, with what Consternation and Terror the Protestant Inhabitants of this Kingdom were seiz'd, when in a Time of profound Peace, they saw so fatal a Conspiracy suddenly break out, of which they had no Foresight, and against which they cou'd take no effectual Measures for their own Safety or Defence. What a miserable Spectacle must it be, to see so many Thousands of 'em, stripp'd of all their Goods, turn'd naked out of their Houses, to travel in Frost and Snow towards

the few Places of Safety that were not yet in the Power of their Enemies ; and even of these the most were perfidiously murder'd by the Way ; and of the few that dragg'd their weary Limbs to any Place of Refuge, yet many died of the Distempers contracted by the Hardships they had endur'd, or sunk under the Weight of that Grief and Sorrow, that their surprizing Calamities and Losses had brought upon 'em. But even this seeming Tenderness of their Enemies, in suffering a few to escape out of their Hands, did not last long : For the blind and furious Zeal that the Principles of their bloody Religion inspir'd 'em with, soon extinguish'd all Sentiments of Pity and Compassion towards those, whom the Church of *Rome* had taught 'em to regard as *damnable Hereticks* : Their Clergy represented to their deluded Profelytes, *the killing of such Hereticks*, as a *meritorious Action*, and the *shedding their Blood*, as an *acceptable Oblation to God* ; and they found a bigotted Laity forward enough to put those vile Principles in Practice, against those whom they hated, both on the Account of Religion and of Interest. They were equally bent to extinguish the reformed Religion, and *British* Name : Both incited these Savage Beasts to seize their defenceless Prey. Some they forc'd into Houses or Barns, and burnt 'em there ; some they drove to Rivers and drown'd 'em ; some they convey'd into Woods, and there miserably butcher'd 'em. So that the poor sufferers might justly take up the Words of the Psalmist, *For thy Sake we are kill'd all the Day long, we are accounted as Sheep for the Slaughter.* xliv. Psal. 22. And by such open Violence as this, 'tis computed that about 200000 Protestants were destroy'd in cold Blood, without the least Provocation given to those inhuman Murderers. And the Circumstances of Savage Cruelty that some of those Murders were attended with, were too shocking to Human Nature to bear a particular Recital of 'em. But, my Brethren, tho' these monstrous Barbarities have left such a Brand on the *Romish* Church, and such a Blot on the Names of the Bloody Actors in this Tragedy, and on the See of

Rome

Rome that applauded 'em, as can never be wip'd out; yet we must not overlook the Hand of a Righteous God, who for the Sins of his People, abandon'd 'em to the fury of such implacable Enemies. For tho' we cannot say on this Account, that the Protestants of that Age, *were greater Sinners than others*: Yet we may conclude, That it was no small or trivial Guilt that drew down upon 'em such awful Effects of Divine Severity and Displeasure.

And one wou'd think, that such a terrible Calamity as this, shou'd have been a lasting Warning to that Remnant of Protestants that were *pluck'd as a Brand out of this Fire*; and to all others whose Lot the Providence of God has since cast into this Kingdom. But alas! not many more than Forty Years were elaps'd, before a provoked God saw it meet to employ the same Enemies as *the Rod of his Anger, and the Staff of his Indignation*, to chastize a disobedient and unthankful People. A Popish Prince (thro' the unaccountable Folly of those Protestants that oppos'd his Exclusion) ascended the Throne; and having triumph'd over a weak and ill concerted Insurrection, soon discover'd his Inclinations to trample on our Laws and Liberties, in order to the Extirpation of the Reformed Religion: And in this Kingdom he had made such quick Advances towards the Execution of his Design, that the Protestants of it were entirely deliver'd into the Hands of our Popish Enemies: All Civil and Military Power was intrusted with 'em, and we quickly felt the pernicious Effects of it. The *Herds and Flocks* of the Protestants in most Parts of the Kingdom, became a Prey to open barefac'd Rapine and Violences. Those that fled from the Kingdom, had their Estates confiscated; those that stay'd were disarm'd, had a Popish Army quarter'd upon 'em, and many of 'em confin'd to Prison. Thus were they left as defenceless *Sheep* in the Midst of *Ravering Wolves*, who were more restrain'd by their *Politicks* than by their *Inclinations* from destroying 'em. And had their Designs for restoring that abdicated Prince Succeeded, we cou'd in this Kingdom have expected no other Issue than

than the utter Ruin of our Religion and Liberties ; and 'tis too probable, that we might have seen all the Barbarities of the former Massacre of 1641. acted over again. But a gracious God was pleas'd at this Time to lay a more powerful Restraint on the Rage of our Enemies, and gave them only a Permission to *spoyl* and *vex*, but not to *kill* and *destroy* us. And indeed they had been suffer'd to proceed so far in their Attempts to subvert the Protestant Interest in this Kingdom, that the Reduction of it cost a great Deal both of *Blood* and *Treasure*. And it highly becomes us to reflect upon the Calamities we then suffer'd, and the Dangers we were then reduc'd to, with a deep Humiliation : We must justify God in his paternal Corrections, and own his holy and righteous Hand, in thus far *delivering us into the Hands of our Enemies to vex us*. Our Sins were at that Time come to a great Height ; our Irreligion and Profaneness, our Intemperance and Uncleanneſs, our Luxury and Pride, our *Fullness of Bread*, and *Contempt of the Poor*, our Profanation of God's holy Name and Day, and other Immoralities did greatly abound. And no Wonder that such Guilt as this shou'd expose us to such Marks of God's righteous Displeasure. 'Tis a much greater Wonder, that we were not made the Monuments of far greater Severity. And among other Sins, I cannot but think, That the Judgements of God upon us then, point us to *one*, that I fear has but been little consider'd to this Day, *viz*, Our Neglect of using proper Means of propagating the Knowledge of the Gospel to the deluded Popish Natives of this Kingdom. While they retain the Principles of the Romish Religion, we can expect no other, than that those will prompt 'em whenever 'tis in their Power to throw off the Yoke of a Protestant Government, and to extirpate what they are blindly taught to call *Hereſy*. I fear we have been more intent upon possessing their justly forfeited Estates, than upon promoting the Salvation of their Souls. Had suitable Methods been us'd by those in Authority, to diffuse the Knowledge of true Religion among 'em, by encouraging fit Persons to preach to 'em

'em in their own Language ; their being reconcil'd to the Truth of God, wou'd have rendred 'em hearty Friends, instead of being inveterate Enemies to us. And 'tis very unaccountable, that all Projects of this Kind, set on Foot at several Times, have been hitherto discountenanc'd and neglected by those in whose Power it was to promote the Execution of 'em. And perhaps 'tis for this as one Reason, that they are left to be as *Pricks in our Eyes*, and *Thorns in our Sides*. And God grant that we may not by continuing to neglect suitable Endeavours for their Conversion, provoke him to deliver us once more into their Power, to punish our wretched Lukewarmness in his Interest and Cause.

Upon the whole, Tho' we may say to God, with respect to his Judgments on the Protestant Inhabitants of this Kingdom, *Let not all the Troubles seem little before thee that has come upon us*, &c. Yet we must add, for the Vindication of Divine Providence in his severest Dispensations towards us, *Howbeit thou art just in all that has been brought upon us, for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly*. ix. Neh. 32, 33. And we have the more Reason to say so, when we consider how his Justice has been temper'd with an admirable Mixture of Mercy.

And this leads me to the next Use,

II. This Subject calls us to adore the manifold Mercies of that gracious God, who has, when we cried to him in the Time of Trouble, given us Saviours who saved us from the Hand of our Enemies.

As to the former Rebellion of 1641, which involv'd the greatest Part of this Kingdom in such a Deluge of Blood ; there was yet a seasonable Interposal of Divine Mercy, in setting Bounds to the destructive Rage of those inhumane Rebels. It was one Branch of their hellish Design, to surprize the Castle of Dublin, and the Magazine of Arms lodg'd there, and to make themselves Masters of this Capital City of the Kingdom ; the Instruments were all prepar'd for the Execution of it. But the vigilant Providence of that God, from whose

whose all-seeing Eye, the most secret Conspiracies of his People's Enemies cannot be conceal'd, appear'd in that Extremity of our Danger for the Prevention of it. He touch'd the Heart of one of the Conspirators, with that Horror and Remorse, as oblig'd him to make a timely Discovery of it to the Government, the very Evening before the intended Execution. But tho' this Discovery was hardly credited, because it seem'd improbable, that so general a Conspiracy cou'd be carry'd on with so profound a Silence ; yet it put the Government upon taking effectual Methods to blast the Success of that wicked Enterprize. And tho' this did not stop the Progress of their destructive Rage in most other Parts of the Kingdom ; yet here a small Number of Protestants found a safe Shelter from that terrible Storm. *Derry* and *Enniskilling* prov'd also a Sanctuary to those Protestants in their Neighbourhood, that made their timely Flight thither. So that hereby a Remnant was sav'd from the common Destruction in which the rest was involv'd. And a gracious God, gradually rais'd up such Instruments and Leaders for our Deliverance, inspir'd 'em with such intrepid Courage, and crown'd their Attempts with such surprizing Successes, against far greater Numbers of those bloody Rebels, that before the War kindled by the Rebellion, was ended, their Cruelties did not go wholly unaveng'd by the Justice of God ; and the Protestant Interest of this Kingdom was not only rescued from the utter Ruin it was threatn'd with, but considerably afterwards enlarg'd, and more firmly rooted by this detestable Attempt for the Extirpation of it.

And sure we shou'd never forget that latter merciful Deliverance, that so many of us were Eye Witnesses of.

I have already suggested to you, to what distressful Circumstances the Protestants of this Kingdom were reduc'd by the late King *James*, when he put the Government of it entirely into the Hands of our Popish Enemies, which was in effect *setting the Wolves to guard the Sheep*. We cou'd (if we judg'd of Things according to

to humane Appearance) have nothing less than entire Destruction in our melancholly Prospect and View. And our Case appear'd the more Deplorable and hopeless, when the whole Protestant Interest in *Great-Britain* was so visibly expos'd to the common Danger. That bigotted Prince was flush'd with Confidence upon his Success, in quashing the first Attempt against him in the Beginning of his Reign. He had a formidable Army on Foot, prepar'd, as he imagin'd, to be his Tools in executing the black Designs he had form'd against our Religion and Liberties. He had a powerful Popish Allie, on whose Assistance he reckon'd he might depend, whenever he had Occasion for it : And he rely'd too far on the slavish Doctrines that so many had advanc'd, and thought they wou'd effectually bind up the Hands of the Nation from opposing his destructive Designs. (but in that he found himself miserably deceiv'd) All these Things encourag'd him to take large and hasty Steps towards effecting his pernicious Projects. But a gracious God did then, in Compassion to our seemingly helpless Case, raise up for us an illustrious *Deliverer*. He inspir'd an Heroic Prince with Wisdom to form, and Courage to execute his noble Projects for rescuing our Religion and Liberties from imminent Ruin. He inclin'd the Hearts of the *States-General* (that are usually so wary and cautious in their publick Measures) to put such an extraordinary Confidence in the Prince, as to trust him in this dangerous Conjunction with their Naval Force, and a great Number of their Troops in so bold an Expedition. He so far infatuated the Councils of the *French* Monarch, that instead of marching his Forces on the Side of *Flanders*, (which in all Probability must have crush'd this Design in the Bud) he turn'd his Army towards *Germany*, which gave the Prince a more favourable Opportunity to pursue his great Undertaking. That God, that has the Winds at Command, conducted the Prince's Fleet safe to their intended Harbour. He powerfully sway'd the Inclinations of the Body of Protestants in *England*, to concur with him in that glorious Design of

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breaking

breaking the Chains of Slavery and Popery from off their Necks. A great Part of King *James's* Army on which he rely'd, unwilling to ingage in his pernicious Measures, deserted his Cause, and join'd the Prince. This struck such a Terror and Consternation into that deluded King, that his guilty Fears made him not only quit the Field, but flee out of the Kingdom. A Convention was call'd, and (notwithstanding the perverse Opposition of a Set of Men, that seem'd discontented with their present Safety, and inclin'd to return to their former Bondage) did, by their wise and deliberate Councils, (tho' carry'd by a small Majority of Voices) establish a Protestant King and Queen on the Throne, and put the Administration of the Kingdom into the Hand of their generous Deliverer, as a just Reward of his hazardous, but successful Undertaking. The Kingdom of *Scotland* soon follow'd their laudable Example. And thus was this mighty Revolution in a few Months brought about almost without any Effusion of Blood. With such an incredible Swiftness, did a glorious Salvation surprize those, who a little before had nothing but inevitable ruin in their Eye. It was like the *Light of the rising Sun*, that suddenly *dissels the Darkness of the Night*.

'Tis true indeed, the Deliverance of the Protestants of this Kingdom cost a more tedious Struggle; but it gave us the greater Occasion to behold the successive Wonders of Divine Power and Mercy in this Land. *Derry* was defended by an Handful of resolute Men, whom many of their Leaders had forsaken, and some endeavoured to betray; and after a long Siege was unexpectedly reliev'd, when Famine had brought 'em to the last Extremity. Our kind Deliverer came over with a powerful Army, to rescue us from the Oppression under which we groan'd. And by that memorable Victory at the *Boyn*, drove our Enemies out of this Province, with such Terror and Precipitation, that they left this City without the least Damage or Harm to the Protestant Inhabitants of it, many of whom were surpriz'd to find themselves in one Day Prisoners in

and on the next intrusted with the Command of it; And after this the Banks of the *Shannon* and the Fields of *Aghrim*, were so many bright Scenes, in which the great God remarkably appear'd for our Defence to scatter our *Enemies*, and to facilitate that entire Reduction of the Kingdom that quickly follow'd. Thus were we again sav'd by the signal Interposal of his mighty and merciful Hand. We then *sung his Praises* for it. O may the great God never have just Occasions to reproach us (as he once did his ancient People after a most memorable Deliverance) that we *soon forgot his Works*. cvi Ps. 12, 13.

But, my Brethren, we have yet a more late and fresh Deliverance, that we shou'd by no Means overlook.

'Tis true indeed, we were not at this time actually given up into the Hands of our Enemies. But we were in far greater Danger of it, than most of us apprehend, and then many are yet willing to believe. We have no Reason to doubt that Designs were form'd, and Schemes projected for defeating the Protestant Succession, and subjecting us to the Tyranny of a Popish Pretender. 'Tis manifest, that large Steps were taken towards putting the Civil, and even the Military Power, into the Hands of such as were the most likely Instruments for the Execution of it. And we cannot forget what Artifices were used to brow beat, and discountenance, to Weaken and Crush those that were the sincerest Well-wishers to the Protestant Succession, both in the Neighbouring Kingdom and in this. A potent Confederacy, that was not only the firmest Barrier against the Ambition of *France*; but the best Security for the Protestant Succession, was perfidiously betray'd, disconcerted and broken. An ignominious and pernicious Peace was made with an inveterate Enemy of the Reformed Religion, which rais'd him from a sinking Condition to that formidable Power, that enabled him to give Laws to those that had conquer'd him, and put him into a Capacity of giving powerful Assistance to his Pupil in his pernicious Design of ascending the British Throne. But here Divine Mercy lay in Ambush for us; and when our Fears had

sunk us as low in our melancholy Thoughts of the unhappy Posture of Affairs, as the Hopes of our Enemies had rais'd them high ; then did he surprize both *them* and *us*, by giving our present King *George* a peaceable and undisturbed Accession to the Throne of these Kingdoms. An unexpected Event, that our Enemies look'd on with Confusion and Terror, while we beheld it with transports of Joy. An Event that surpriz'd and stunn'd them before their Measures were fully ripe for the Prevention of it ; but gave us a bright Reverse of that dark Scene which we were trembling at the Consequences of. But tho' our Enemies were thus stunn'd at present by this unforeseen Event, that seem'd to break their Schemes. and dash their Hopes: Nay, tho' they were farther dispirited by the no less unexpected Death of that French Monarch whom they regarded as the great Prop and Pillar of their Cause ; yet they resum'd their Courage, and in the Face of all these Difficulties, concerted an open and barefac'd Rebellion for dethroning our King, and setting the Crown on the Head of an attainted Popish Pretender. And if this traiterous Attempt of theirs prov'd so dangerous, when they had only their own Foot to stand upon, how much more threatening wou'd it have been, if they had any considerable Assistance of foreign Troops. But a gracious God both chang'd the Posture of Publick Affairs abroad, and inspir'd the British Parliament at home with that Unanimity and Vigour in their Resolutions, and our King with that Wisdom and Conduct, and our Forces with that Courage, that soon brought those daring Rebels that had so insolently defy'd his Majesty's Authority to submit to his Mercy ; and to beg their Lives from him against whose Crown and Life they had so *traiterously*, and many of 'em so *perfidiously* lifted up their Hands.

And sure we need no more to inhance the Mercy of God in this Deliverance in our serious Reflexions upon it, then to set before our Eyes the dismal Consequences that must have attended the Success of this rebellious Undertaking. What cou'd the Friends of the present
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Government (and I hope that all sincere Protestants are such) have expected from the Success of a Popish Pretender, but the utmost Effects of implacable Revenge? All the Laws pass'd since the Revolution, wou'd have been regarded as null and void; our civil Liberties wou'd have been contemptuously trampled under the Feet of an insulting Conqueror. The Duty of *unlimited Non-resistance to the most illegal Violence, and of Obedience without Reserve*, wou'd have been severely exacted, by those that preach'd it up without ever intending to practise it themselves: The Debts contracted for the Defence of the Nation in a Tedious War, had been wip'd out with a general Sponge; A long Popish Line had been restor'd, that must have rendred the utter Extirpation of the reformed Religion in these Kingdoms inevitable. Nay, if we must judge of the Pretender's Designs by the bold Writings of the present Champions of his Cause, *the National Church* must have been confin'd to the Non-juring Clergy, and all that have sworn to the Government since the Revolution, excluded as damnable Schismatics. And those that of late Years have made the loudest Outcries of the Danger of the Church, wou'd have sensibly felt the Effects of their own Folly, when it was too late to prevent it. From such dismal Calamities as these, have we been preserv'd by God's giving us so illustrious a *Deliverer* as King *GEORGE*, and by succeeding his Attempts in the speedy Suppression of so desperate and formidable a Rebellion. So that we may truly say of our good God, as in the Verse following the Text, *Many Times has he deliver'd us according to his Mercies*. Even thrice within the Memory of some that have liv'd to a considerable Age among us.

And it shou'd the more powerfully incite us to adore the Sovereign Mercy of God in our repeated Deliverances, if we consider such Particulars as these which I shall only briefly suggest.

1. We have great Reason to be sensible, that they have been bestow'd on a most unworthy and guilty People.

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The Calamities and Dangers into which we have been brought, have been indeed the just Effects of Divine Severity: But our Deliverances from 'em have been Acts of most free and undeserv'd Pity. We have not been deliver'd for any Righteousness of our own, but for his Name's Sake.

But of this I may have Occasion to take more Notice under the last general Use.

2. Our Deliverances have come as the Return of Prayer.

We have in the Time of Trouble sent up our mournful Cries to God, and he has heard from Heaven, and given us Saviours to save us from the Hands of our Enemies. And such signal Mercies shou'd be the more welcome, and the more affecting to us, when they come as the Answer of earnest Prayer. Our Iniquities and Provocations might have justly stopp'd the Ears of an incensed God, if he had not open'd it to the Cry of our extreme Distresses and Dangers: And we are therefore under the highest Obligation to pay our Vows of grateful Thanksgiving to that God who has been the Heaver of Prayer.

3. The Mercies of God in our repeated Deliverances have been *distinguishing* ones.

His People in other Parts of Europe remain to this Day the Monuments of his awful Severity, while we are the Instances of his discriminating Goodness.

His once flourishing Churches in Poland, in Bohemia, in Hungary, in France, have for many Years layn desolate and waste; and after their long continued Sufferings, there is yet little Prospect of their Deliverance. We may reasonably believe, that there is some Remnant among them that have been long crying to God, and he has hitherto rais'd up no Deliverer for 'em. And are they greater Sinners than we? Have we deserv'd greater Clemency and Compassion at the Hands of God than they? To what other Cause then can we ascribe these renewed Deliverances vouchsafed to us rather than to them, but to his manifold and distinguishing

ing Mercies to us. To this we owe it, that that *bitter Cup* is *passed from us*, which they are still *drinking the Dregs of*; that we have occasion to rejoyce in the *Light of God's Salvation*, while they sit in *disconsolate Darknes*; and that such *Songs of Deliverance* are put into our Mouths, while theirs are still fill'd with *sorrowful Complaints*. Surely as the View of their continued Desolations should make our very Bowels yearn over them, and excite our most ardent Prayers for 'em, so it shou'd enlarge our Hearts in admiring Thoughts of God's singular Compassions towards us, and open our Mouths wide in his thankful and joyful Praises. But.

III. This Subject shou'd put us on making such an Improvement of God's repeated Deliverances as may prevent the Return of his awful Judgments.

We see by the Text, and by what we read in the following Verses, That the great God expects that his merciful Deliverances shou'd produce a suitable and ingenuous Reformation: And that 'tis his usual Method, when a deliver'd People do not render to him according to his signal Benefits, but *after they have rest, do evil before him again*, to visit them with sharper and severer Judgments, and to renew their Calamities, when they renew their Provocations,

And do I need to tell you, that this Observation has a very melancholy Aspect upon us at this Day?

Have not a great Number of such as call themselves Protestants in these Kingdoms, seem'd to forget these marvellous Works of Divine Power and Mercy for the Preservation of the Reformed Religion among us? Have not some openly branded the Revolution of 1688 as a Rebellion? and treated the Memory of that illustrious Deliver, who was the blessed Instrument of Divine Providence in bringing it about, with the utmost Indignity and Reproach, as a vile Usurper? Have they not undervalued all those National Blessings that were the happy Consequences and Effects of it? Have they not despis'd the inestimable Blessing of the Protestant Succession? Have not many of them join'd with our Popish Enemies

mies in their pernicious Attempt to overturn that Succession, and to advance a Popish Pretender to the Throne, and this in direct Contradiction to the most solemn *Oaths*, whereby they have added the Guilt of *Perjury* to that of *Ingratitude* and *Rebellion*? Have not many more shown a wretched *Neutrality* and *Indifference*, when so important a Cause was at Stake, as whether the *Reformed Religion*, and *Civil Liberty*, or *Popery* and *Slavery*, was to be our publick Lot? Are there not great Numbers in these Kingdoms, who openly express a Murmuring and discontented Spirit at all those great and glorious Things which the mighty Hand of God has done for us? Who repine at the Glories and Successes of one of the Greatest and Best of Princes that ever sway'd the *British Scepter*, and despise that valuable Security we have for the Continuance of our Civil and Religious Liberties in his numerous Royal Progeny? And may not such hainous Guilt as this provoke God to repent of all the Good that he has done unto us, when so many among us express such vile Ingratitude both to the *Author* and to the *Instrument* of our Deliverance?

Besides, are those that have a juster Sense of the great Mercies of God, dispos'd to make any due Improvement of 'em? Is not that necessary Work of a *National Reformation of Manners*, either discountenanc'd, or neglected and laid aside? Do they shew any hearty Zeal for the Glory of that great God, who has according to his manifold Mercies, so often given us Saviours to save us from the Hand of our Enemies? Have our common Dangerers from Popery done any thing considerable to cement the divided Affections of Protestants? Have they dispos'd us to fix the common Protestant Interest upon more large and comprehensive Foundations? Have they extinguish'd our bitter Animosities? Is there not a visible Decay and Declension of Practical Religion and Godliness among Protestants of all Denominations? Are Gods holy Institutions more valued, more diligently attended, and more seriously improv'd? Is Family Religion sensibly reviv'd? Is there any hopeful Prospect as to the rising Generation? Alas

Alas! my Brethren, the Returns that we make, are unsuitable to these eminent repeated Mercies of God, which may justly awaken our cautious Fear. Such Guilt after so many and so great Deliverances, is highly aggravated; and seems to forebode more terrible Effects of Divine Displeasure than we have yet felt, if his Sovereign Mercy prevent 'em not. In order whereto it becomes all serious Protestants deeply to lament it; to deprecate the Wrath of an offended God, and in order to the averting of it, to promote a *Personal*, a *Family*, and (as far as they are capable) a *National* Reformation. We have beheld *Deliverances on Mount Sion*, O that we may see the Revival of Holiness there! A gracious God has from time to time given us *Saviours to save us from the Hand of our Enemies*, may we when delivered from the Fear of them, serve him in *Righteousness and Holiness all the Days of our Life*! He puts us upon a new Trial. He has rais'd up a great Deliverer for us. A Prince zealously concern'd for the Interest of the Reformed Religion both at Home and Abroad. A Prince intent upon retrieving our sinking Commerce, and securing our publick Safety and Interest. A Prince every way dispos'd by his Wisdom and excellent Temper, to heal our uncomfortable Breaches, and unite our discordant Affections. A Prince whose extensive Influence abroad, renders him a powerful support to the glorious Cause of Religion and Liberty; and whose hopeful and illustrious Issue extends our pleasing Prospect to many succeeding Ages. How highly should we value, how carefully should we improve so excellent a Gift of Heaven to so undeserving a People!

And for those our Popish Enemies from whose Hands we have been so mercifully delivered, I am so far from perswading you to a vindictive Spirit against them, that I would recommend to you the using your compassionate Endeavours for their Conversion and Salvation. 'Tis the Principles of a false Religion, that chiefly render them such inveterate Enemies to us. 'Tis those extinguish in 'em all Sentiments of *Charity*, I had almost said of *Humanity* towards those they blindly call *Hereticks*. Were
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their Eyes open'd to see the pernicious Delusions of Popery, and to behold the Light of uncorrupted Christianity, the main Ground of their unreasonable Hatred would be remov'd; and they would see that that Spirit of blood thirsty Cruelty which Popery inspires, is inconsistent with the Genius of true Christianity. They wou'd discern the vast Difference between the true Catholick Church of Christ (consisting of all such as believe and obey his Gospel) and that *Apostate Mother of Harlots*, that has so falsely usurped that Title, and endeavoured to propagate her vile Idolatry and manifold Abominations, by Fire and Faggot, by Missionary Dragoons, by bloody Massacres, and a barbarous Inquisition Tribunal. What resemblance can they find in this Conduct to that blessed Saviour, who came *not to destroy the Lives of Men, but to save 'em*; not to shed the Blood of his greatest Enemies, but to *shed his own for 'em*! Let us use our best Endeavours to propagate the Light of the Gospel to 'em (the only Means God has appointed to bring Men to the Acknowledgment of the Truth) and leave the Issue and Success to God.

I will close this Discourse with adding one thing more *viz.* That while we joyfully celebrate the manifold Mercies of God in the Deliverances he has wrought for us, and the successive *Saviours* he has rais'd up to be the Instruments thereof. Let us not forget the Case of God's oppressed Churches abroad, that greatly need the same Mercy. Let us pray, That God would also raise up *Deliverers* for 'em. We have no ground to think that he has utterly rejected 'em, and abandon'd 'em to perpetual Desolation. A gracious God will not be always deaf to their incessant and importunate Cries. I should not discourage our praying in Faith for 'em, that we see as yet no probable Means of their Restoration. I cannot but observe, That when our Saviour commands us to *Pray always and not Faint*, by the Parable of the Widow's Importunity, prevailing with the Unjust Judge, he applies it to such a Case as this. *Shall not* (saith he) *God avenge his own Elect, that cry to him Day and Night, tho' he bear long with them?* (i. e. Either the

no' he bear long with their Enemies ; or, tho' the Deliverance of his People seem to them long delay'd) I tell you, that he will *avenge them speedily*. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, shall he find Faith in the Earth, xviii Luke, 1, 7, 8. Let us then joyn our Cries with theirs, that God would arise and have Mercy upon them, and that the Time, the set Time, for their Deliverance may come, cii Pf. 13, 14, 15. We have the most powerful Argument to plead with him drawn from the Regard he has to his own Honour. *He will appear Glorious when he rebuilds their Ruins*, v. 16.

FINIS.

Advertisement.

THERE is in the Press, and will speedily be publish'd, another Sermon, preach'd by the same Author, Oct. 23, 1712.

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